(ii) Dy. Director General (Programmes), ICCR toured abroad on one occasion and visited Egypt.

(iii) Assistant Private Secretary to President, ICCR toured abroad on one occasion and visited United Kingdom and France.

The purpose of their visits and the expenditure incurred on these visits is as per Annexure. (*See* Appendix 171, Annexure No. 24]

(c) The achievements of these foreign tours are as under:

The tours abroad have facilitated establishment of new cultural links, revived and strengthened the existing cultural relations and enhanced mutual understanding of India and other countries and institutions abroad. The visits have enhanced cultural exchanges at the institutional level and at the bilateral level facilitating people to people contact.

The tours abroad by President, ICCR and the officials of the ICCR have unilateraly given opportunities to negotiate steps and measures to further the objectives of ICCR as defined in the Memorandum of Association when the ICCR was established in 1950.

The visits abroad have facilitated a better understanding and appreciation abroad of Indian art and culture and put forth an image of India in the international community fulfilling its endeavour to continuously enhance people to people contact with an open attitude while being receptive to the cultures of other countries.

The visits abroad have provided a supporting role for exchange programmes with all friendly countries. The periodic visits and meetings with heads of cultural departments, organisations, institutions, scholars, intellectuals and policy makers are necessary in view of the emphasis on implementation of formal reciprocal arrangements for cultural exchanges contained in the Cultural Exchange Protocols.

Protection of Hindu temples in Vietnam

1127. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the jewels and properties of Hindu temples in Vietnam are in the custody of the National Bank of Vietnam; and

(b) if so, what steps are taken by our embassy to help the management of Hindu temples to recover those properties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) The jewels and some other items of Saigon Thendayudhapani Temple belonging to the Chettiar Community who left Saigon in the wake of the fall of Saigon in 1975, has been lying in the custody of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of HO Chi Minh City.

(b) The properties have been retained in the custody of the Industrial and Commercial Bank and not handed over to the temple management committee, as per the wishes of the Chettiar Community.

US Counsul-General's comment on Economic policies of West Bengal

1128. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the comments recently made by the Consul-General of the United States of America at Calcutta openly criticising the economic and industrial policies of the Government of West Bengal;

(b) whether it is within the preview of a foreign diplomat to offer such public comments on our internal affairs; and

(c) whether Government will ask the US administration to make proper amends for this breach of etiquette on the part of its representative?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Government are aware of press reports regarding remarks made by the US Consul General in Calcutta during an address to the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and Industry on June 3, 1994. Government have noted the clarification issued by the US Consul General in Calcutta on June 6, 1994 stating that he 'categorically did not criticise the Government of West Bengal or any of its officials".

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Diplomatic personnel in US and Indian Embassies

1129. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of diplomatic personnel as on June 30, 1994 the United States of America has been permitted to maintain its embassy and consulates, and whether this number exceeds the number of personnel our embassy and consular officers are permitted to maintain the United States;

(b) what is the number of Indian personnel recruited locally who are employed by the US embassy and consular offices; and

(c) whether the terms and conditions of such locally recruited personnel are subject to Indian labour laws?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) 136. Yes, Sir.

(b) 726.

(c) Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961 Diplomatic Missions are expected to respect the local laws and regulations of the host country. In 1975, and subsequently in 1988 all foreign diplomatic missions in India were provided with a copy of a Model Contract which contained the terms and conditions of employment which the diplomatic missions might enter into with their Indian employees in order to ensure that both sides were aware of their rights and obligations. However,, the terms and conditions mentioned in the Model Contract are suggestive in nature and the Missions are at liberty to offer enhanced benefits if they do desire.

Discontent in the ICCR

1130. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing discontent in the Indian Council for Cultural Relations; and

(b) whether any move to set right the situation has been made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

विदेशों में सांस्कृतिक-केन्द्रों की स्थापना

1131. **श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह** : क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) भारत-सरकार ने विदेशों में किन-किन स्थानों पर सांस्कृतिक केन्द्र खोले हैं और सरकार किन-किन देशों में नए सांस्कृतिक केन्द्र खोलने का विचार रखती है ;

(ख) विदेशों में किन-किन स्थानों पर हिन्दी-परीक्षायें आयोजित की जा रही हैं और भारत सरकार ने किन-किन स्थानों पर हिन्दी के अध्यापन हेतु प्राध्यापक भेजे हैं ;

(ग) विदेशों में हिन्दी-प्राध्यापकों के ऐसे कितने पद रिक्त थे जिन्हें भरा जाना था, परन्तु उन्हें अभी तक नहीं भरा गया है और ऐसे पद कब से रिक्त हैं; और

(घ) सरकार इस सम्बन्ध में क्या कार्यवाही कर रही है ?